

## ECHOES/FANTASIES

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**1. IAN SHANAHAN (B.1962): ECHOES/FANTASIES (1984), FOR BASS CLARINET AND PERCUSSION.**

*Nigel Westlake – bass clarinet / Michael Askill – percussion (vibraphone and tubular bells).*

**Echoes/Fantasies** is my first piece in a series of compositions for woodwinds and percussion instruments. It falls into two contrasting sections, connected by a short linking passage. The sections themselves are related only by tempo correspondences, an occasional melodic fragment, and six rhythmic permutations based upon the ‘perfect number’ 28 (of which three are used in each section). As the piece progresses, the complexity of the bass clarinet part develops considerably, in a style somewhat akin to a free jazz improvisation!

This work exploits extremes of tempo and tension. **Echoes/Fantasies** begins (and ends) in a very lively and ecstatic manner, but winds down to a slow, distant and infinitely calm feel – intended to evoke images of certain lonely and remote parts of Australia. The hot, shimmering sounds of the vibraphone bring forth in my mind visions of Australian deserts, with mirages of rarefied air rising from their sands, whereas some of the ‘cool’ bass clarinet sonorities – particularly the breath-sounds – remind me of gentle waves washing sand up onto some deserted beach. Anyway, this halcyon state is maintained for a while, but is then imperceptibly transformed back into the original manner. The title? It is a reference to earlier works, but also indicates the structural echoes and flights-of-fancy involved, as well as the general sound-world and potential extramusical associations of the piece.

I.S.

**2. IAN SHANAHAN (B.1962): SINEBIRDS : FERAL ABACUS (1981), FOR FIXED MEDIA.**

In late 1999, whilst rummaging through a cupboard, I came across a long-forgotten-about tape dating from my early undergraduate student days, of a hitherto untitled, brief electronic study – a somewhat Varèsian 1950s-sounding exercise that consists almost entirely of sine tones subjected to spatial manipulation. It was, I vaguely recall, created over a period of about thirty minutes using a rather crackly old EMS Putney VCS3 analog synthesizer, a quaint contraption produced during the 1960s which is now well and truly a museum piece.

What would I name this electroacoustical trifle, having refamiliarized myself with it? On the one hand, the sound-world of the piece reminded me of a chorus of surrealistic but querulous bird-calls (hence “SineBirds”); yet at the same time, an image of a demented, out-of-control mechanical calculator inexplicably came into focus (so, “Feral Abacus”). I credit Bob Ellis for the colourful expression ‘feral abacus’, passed on to me fortuitously by his son Jack just two days before the tape was to be archived onto CD: this was Ellis’s vivid epithet for one of the plethora of desiccated-ideologue economic-(ir)rationalist bean-counters who front the Right Wing of Australian politics ... those soulless dim-wits who apparently cannot see anything beyond a balance-sheet’s bottom line, and who forget that we live in a society, not just an economy.

**SineBirds : Feral Abacus** was realized in 1981 under the guidance of Ian Fredericks, at the Sydney University Experimental Sound Studio in the Music Department of the University of Sydney.

I.S.

IAN SHANAHAN (B.1962): **FIVE ÉTUDES** (1988–1991), FOR SOLO RECORDER.  
*Ian Shanahan – solo recorder.*

3. **HELICAL RIBBON** (1990), A TERSE ÉTUDE FOR ALTO RECORDER.

4. **LINGUA SILENS FLORUM** (1991), A GARLAND FOR PREPARED ALTO RECORDER.

5. **CATHY'S SONG** (1988), AN ENCORE PIECE FOR SOPRANINO (OR ALTO) RECORDER.

6. **DYSFUNCTIONAL HABAÑERA** (1990), FOR ALTO RECORDER.

7. **GRAEME PETRIE, SCALLYWAG** (1990), FOR ALTO RECORDER.

These five études are unique in my *oeuvre*: they are all deliberately straightforward (being composed for adventurous young recorder players), and each concentrates upon a quite narrow technical region. **Helical Ribbon**, a multiphonic study in funk, is dedicated to Warren Burt. **Lingua Silens Florum** was written for Professor Eric Gross, on his retirement from the University of Sydney; it requires considerable breath- and articulatory-control, since the recorder's endhole is blocked airtight. **Cathy's Song** is a compact study in agility and asymmetric rhythm. **Dysfunctional Habañera**, respectfully offered to Dulcie Holland, calls for just one fingering-pattern per bar: different pitches are obtained by regulating air-flow and articulation. **Graeme Petrie, scallywag** (this Debussyesque title being a wink at one of my mischievous students) is another simple exercise in multiphonics – rather cheeky and insouciant, exactly like its namesake.

I.S.

8. **ROBERT ALLWORTH** (B.1943): **MOVEMENTS FOR MANDOLIN AND PIANO** (1999).

i. Moderato. ii. Mèno mosso. iii. Poco mèno mosso. iv. Vivo.

*Michael Hooper – mandolin / Danielle Perini – piano.*

My composition **Movements for Mandolin and Piano** was completed on 15 August 1999 – the Feast Day of the Assumption of The Blessed Virgin Mary. This piece explores various rhythmic motives as well as the timbral possibilities of the mandolin (with piano accompaniment).

R.A.

9. **ANN CARR-BOYD** (B.1938): **FANDANGO** (1982), FOR TWO MANDOLINS, MANDOLA, GUITAR AND BASS GUITAR.

New version, arranged by Adrian Hooper, for The Sydney Mandolins Quintet (1999).

*Adrian Hooper and Paul Hooper – mandolins / Joyce Bootsma – mandola / Barbara Hooper – guitar / Michael Hooper – bass guitar.*

**Fandango** was commissioned by Adrian Hooper, director of **The Sydney Mandolins**; it is my second work for this group. Their 1982 ABC recording of **Fandango** has been released on several Jade CDs; its acclaim is largely due to producer Robert Allworth's initial enthusiasm. Adrian's arrangement of **Fandango** here heightens its clarity.

A.C-B.

10. **DULCIE HOLLAND** (B.1913): **BALLAD FOR CLARINET AND PIANO** (1952).

*Clive Amadio – clarinet / Olga Krasnik – piano.*

I wrote this one-movement **Ballad** especially for Clive Amadio. It is a ballad without words and listeners, should they so wish, could easily fit their own stories to its changing moods. The music has a nautical flavour and the 'programme' might simply be that of the capricious sea: calm, turbulent, and at peace again.

D.H.

**DULCIE HOLLAND** (B.1913): **THREE TREE SONGS** (1991), FOR TENOR AND PIANO.

*David Hamilton – tenor voice / Nigel Butterley – piano.*

My **Three Tree Songs** are settings of poems by Andrew Lansdown from his 1991 anthology **The Grasshopper Heart**. These songs were performed at the **Sydney Festival** in January 1993, during a concert given in my honour to mark my 80th birthday; the performers then were the same as those that feature on this recording.

D.H.

#### 11. WILLOW

The willow is a fisherman, / and highly successful at that. / I refer not to the rods / it rests towards the river / in winter, but to the strings / of fish it shoulders in summer. / The tree teems with fish– / small, green minnows strung / by their heads, dangling / one below the other, some / twisting in the dry breeze.

#### 12. TREE FERN

The tree-fern is an orchestra / playing a pastorella. Glorious / the meticulous melodies, the green / movements. On centre stage / the soloist lifts his violin– / light on the line of the neck, / the tuning pegs, the perfect / carved curl—poised to begin.

#### 13. PINES

These pines, or the seeds of their parents, / were imported from America. / Planted in Australia, they are perturbed / by memories of the Northern Hemisphere. // See that tree, for instance—the tuft / of dead needles caught in the crook / of branch and trunk. It is the throat-tassel / of a moose—the bell of a big bull. // Look. Many trees have grown beards. / The uppermost branches of some are bare– / all bone and peeling velvet. / They are restless in the rough wind. // Listen. Farther off in the forest, / the clash of antlers!

**ERIC GROSS** (B.1926): **SUITE FOR TROMBONE QUARTET**, OP.221 (1997).

*Brendan Collins, Will Farmer, Greg van der Struik and Damian Butler – trombones.*

#### 14. INTRODUCTION

#### 15. PHANTASY

#### 16. TROMBONE LULLABY

#### 17. TROMBONE FANFARE

I composed this **Suite** for the prominent Dutch trombonist Jeroen Drenth; it was recorded by the Trombones of the **Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra** during October 1998. The complete work comprises four separate movements, but each one may be performed as a separate concert item if desired. I have endeavoured to utilize the sonorities and dynamic contrasts which can be created by an ensemble of outstanding trombonists wherein each voice is of equal importance. **Introduction** uses an initial quaver-phrase, based upon 4ths, which is stated by various members of the quartet but is eventually replaced by passages where the emphasis is on harmony and rhythm (so as to emphasize and confirm a light-hearted, scherzo-like atmosphere). **Phantasy** makes use of passages for solo instruments in imitative, fugato style and texture, as well as displaying a number of dynamic and playful climaxes. **Trombone Lullaby** is designed to produce a relaxed and sleepy ambience, whereas **Trombone Fanfare** brings the **Suite** to a bombastic conclusion, with the players raising the bells of their trombones at the very end.

E.G.

**LAWRENCE BARTLETT** (B.1933): **JOLLY OCTOPUS** (1990), FOR SOLO PIANO.

*Lawrence Bartlett – piano.*

It was 'show and tell' time at the local Infants' School, and a shy little girl produced an octopus preserved in a jar. I was so amused at this incongruous sight that I thought of an

eight-note theme to honour the legs of the defunct creature, and so the piece began.

L.B.

**19. DEREK STRAHAN (B.1935): CHINA SPRING (1989), FOR 'CELLO AND PIANO.**

*Georg Pedersen – 'cello / David Miller – piano. World Première Performance*

**China Spring** was commissioned by Georg Pedersen, with financial assistance from the Australia Council. It commemorates the Tiananmen Square Massacre of 4 June 1989, the title "China Spring" being the name of an American journal. On one level, the work is a musical depiction of the events leading up to the 'incident'; on another, it adapts a familiar device, the 'battle of anthems' to denote competing allegiances. Five themes are used, two original and three anthems: the Mao theme **The East is Red** is set against **L'Internationale**, which students sang in the Square to keep up their courage; and **The Star-Spangled Banner**, strangely harmonised, is heard, epitomising the statue of Lady Liberty which students erected in the Square. This inflammatory symbol of individual freedom was eventually toppled by a tank – an enduring media image. In one passage, the three anthems are heard simultaneously, each in a different key. **China Spring** opens with an original jazzy theme, which may be taken as an evocation of youth. A second original theme emerges in counterpoint to **L'Internationale** but, as the work ends, is heard standing alone – representing the eternal spring of hope. My thanks to Georg Pedersen and David Miller for applying their virtuosic talents to this piece, and for giving such an incendiary première, heard in this recording.

D.S.

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**TRACKS 1 & 2** – Track 1 recorded 16/6/85 live during an ISCM concert held at the Sydney Opera House; analog master. Track 2 recorded in 1981 at SUESS, the University of Sydney; analog master. Digital Denoising – Adrian Luca, UWS (Nepean), Kingswood, 21/12/99.

**TRACKS 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7** – Tracks 3 & 5 recorded 21/6/90 and Track 4 recorded 27/11/91, at EMI Studios 301, Sydney. Producer – Robert Allworth; Sound Engineer – Martin Benge. Tracks 6 & 7 recorded 15/2/99 at UWS (Nepean), Kingswood. Producer – Ian Shanahan; Sound Engineer – Adrian Luca.

**TRACKS 8 & 9** – 2MBS-FM production, recorded 4/2/00 at 2MBS-FM Studio C. Sound Engineer – Kerry Joyner.

**TRACKS 10, 11, 12 & 13** – Track 10 recorded in 1955 at EMI; analog master. Tracks 11, 12 & 13 recorded 10/2/92 at the ABC (Studio 227), Ultimo. Producer – Judith Irvine; Sound Engineers – Wayne Chapman and Colin Preston.

**TRACKS 14, 15, 16 & 17** – Recorded 6/10/98 in Sydney and edited at Proffi Studios, Sydney. Sound Engineer – Glen Ferguson.

**TRACK 18** – Recorded 1/7/92, at EMI Studios 301, Sydney. Producer – Robert Allworth; Sound Engineer – Martin Benge.

**TRACK 19** – Recorded 12/12/91 live during a concert to aid Amnesty International held at the Joseph Post Auditorium, Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Digital Editing – Bob Scott.

*Programme Notes compiled and edited by Ian Shanahan. CD Jacket: Handpress Graphics – Ph. (02) 9918 7254 – Fx. (02) 9918 5271.*

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**Echoes/Fantasies** is the 72nd CD in the Jade Series of Australian Composers.